

The Edict of Milan

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ras to be handed back without the slightest cost . without any delays or ambiguities (*Postposita li frustrationes atque ambiguitate*). Purchasers ; liad bought such properties in good faith were >e indemnified from the public treasury by grace he Emperor. Jut the abiding interest of this celebrated edict in the general principles there clearly enunciated. >ry man, without distinction of rank or national-is to have absolute freedom to choose and prac-the religion which he deems most suited to his ds (*Libera atque absoluta colendce rcligionis sua vitas*). The phrase is repeated with almost wca-me iteration, but the principle was novel and ,nge, and one can see the anxiety of the framers his edict that there shall be no possible loophole misunderstanding. Everybody is to have free ice; all previous anti-Christian enactments arc ulled ; not only is no compulsion to be employed jnst the Christian, he is not even to be troubled nnoyed (*Citra ullam iniquitiidinsm ac molestiam*)* | novelty lay not so much in the toleration of the tence of Christianity, — both Constantino and nius had two years before signed the edict reby Galerius put an end to the persecution,— in its formal official recognition by the State, /"hat motives, then, are assigned by the Emperors this notable change of policy ? Certainly not tanity. Nothing is said of the terrors of the late ecutions and the horrible sufferings of the Christ— there is merely a bald reference to previous ts which the Emperors consider ** unjust arid